

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 24, 31, and 34 as indicated below.

1. (Canceled)
2. (Canceled)
3. (Canceled)
4. (Canceled)
5. (Canceled)
6. (Canceled)
7. (Canceled)
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16. (Canceled)
17. (Canceled)
18. (Canceled)
19. (Canceled)
20. (Canceled)
21. (Canceled)
22. (Canceled)
23. (Canceled)

24. (Currently Amended) A method for stabilizing conjugates composed of colloidal particles and biomolecules, the method comprising:

adding detergent to a solution containing biomolecules, and thereafter loading colloidal particles with said the solution of biomolecules wherein said detergent does not ~~without~~ adversely ~~influencing~~ influence the function of the conjugates by displacing the biomolecules ~~by the detergent~~ or by ~~interactions of~~ interacting ~~with~~ the biomolecules or the colloidal particles ~~with the detergent~~ after loading.

25. (Previously Added) The method of claim 24, wherein the amount of detergent does not exceed a critical micelle concentration.

26. (Previously Added) The method of claim 25, wherein the concentration of detergent is 0.001 to 1 mM.

27. (Previously Added) The method of claim 24, further comprising:

adding an additional stabilizer after loading the colloidal particles.

28. (Previously Added) The method of claim 27, wherein the additional stabilizer is an inert protein, polyethylene glycol, or a mixture thereof.

29. (Previously Added) The method of claim 24, wherein the colloidal particles are selected from the group consisting of gold, silver, copper, platinum, palladium and mixtures thereof.

30. (Previously Added) The method of claim 24, wherein the biomolecules are selected from the group consisting of antibodies, antibody fragments, lectins, enzymes, streptavidin, avidin, protein A, antigens, peptides and haptens.

31. (Currently Amended) A process for producing colloidal particles having biomolecule ~~absorbing~~ adsorbing surfaces, the process comprising:

adding detergent to a solution containing biomolecules, and thereafter contacting colloidal particles with said the solution of biomolecules wherein said detergent does not without ~~adversely influencing influence~~ the function of the conjugates by displacing the biomolecules ~~by the detergent or by interactions of~~ interacting with the biomolecules or the colloidal particles ~~with the detergent~~ after loading.

32. (Previously Added) The method of claim 31, wherein the colloidal particles are selected from the group consisting of gold, silver, copper, platinum, palladium and mixtures thereof.

33. (Previously Added) The method of claim 31, wherein the biomolecules are selected from the group consisting of antibodies, antibody fragments, lectins, enzymes, streptavidin, avidin, protein A, antigens, peptides and haptens.

34. (Currently Amended) A method for stabilizing conjugates composed of colloidal particles and biomolecules, the method consisting essentially of:

adding detergent to a solution containing biomolecules, loading colloidal particles with said the solution of biomolecules, and thereafter adding an additional stabilizer wherein said detergent does not without ~~adversely influencing influence~~ the function of the conjugates by displacing the biomolecules ~~by the detergent or by interactions of~~ interacting with the biomolecules or the colloidal particles ~~with the detergent~~ after loading.

35. (Previously Added) The method of claim 34, wherein the amount of detergent does not exceed a critical micelle concentration.

36. (Previously Added) The method of claim 35, wherein the concentration of detergent is 0.001 to 1 mM.

37. (Previously Added) The method of claim 34, wherein the additional stabilizer is an inert protein, polyethylene glycol, or a mixture thereof.

38. (Previously Added) The method of claim 34, wherein the colloidal particles are selected from the group consisting of gold, silver, copper, platinum, palladium and mixtures thereof.

39. (Previously Added) The method of claim 34, wherein the biomolecules are selected from the group consisting of antibodies, antibody fragments, lectins, enzymes, streptavidin, avidin, protein A, antigens, peptides, and haptens.